

extreme right of the works, opposite a traverse covering a gateway; and there a parley was held between Captain Latter and some Burmese on the walls, which brought on the first discharge of musketry, killing a serjeant and wounding two men. This fire was taken up, ran down the works, but soon ceased.

At this time Major Errington made his advance on the pagoda and carried it in most gallant style, the 51st Light Infantry maintaining nobly the character they had ever commanded by their courage and distinguished conduct in the field.

The contest that stamped the operations of this remarkable day with a brilliant conclusion was the attack on the mud fort, most scientifically built and of great extent, which could only have been constructed under a disposition that commanded the labour of its subjects in the short time they had been about it. It was not entirely completed in its details within. The storming party under Major Errington proceeding to the left of the Burmese works, accompanied by Lieutenant Rice, of Her Majesty's frigate Fox, and Lieutenant Ford, of the Madras Sappers, came upon this mud fort fully garrisoned and well armed. The attack was most determined, as was the defence obstinate. It was bravely stormed, but with the consequence of Major Errington and several officers and men being severely wounded. Lieutenant Ansley, with a small detachment of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, shared in this contest; he was severely wounded, and the corps proved itself to be as good as it looks, and it is one of the nicest corps I have ever seen; its gallantry and devotion on this occasion claiming the admiration of all who witnessed it. The whole affair was over a little after six o'clock.

While these operations had been going on, the Commodore had claimed the services of Captain Campbell, of the *Sesostris*, and his men, in destroying a large stockade on the opposite bank of the river; they drove off the Burmese, fired the stockade, and took six gnns.

I am informed from several sources that the enemy suffered very severely in the contest in the mud fort.

In having the honour, as well as the gratification, of reporting to the Governor-General in Council the possession of this important station, I will observe that, from every indication of preparation going on, the Government of this country intended to make it a most powerful place, and to repair the loss of Rangoon, by establishing Bassein as their mart of communication with this country, as well as a powerful position to keep in subjection the Pegu population, so decidedly and ever our friends, and also to maintain a threatening attitude towards the south of Arracan.

By leaving Bassein to itself, I should have been giving it back to the soldiery just driven out, as the defences had been built and put into the improved state I have described by five thousand men from the upper country, commanded by a man of reputation. To secure it, I have left a garrison of two companies (160 men) of the 51st Light Infantry, and three hundred men of the 9th Madras Native Infantry. These will be reinforced by an officer of Artillery and half a company, with two 9-pounder guns; the garrison now possessing two 12-inch howitzers. These, with two months' rations, will leave this on, or about, the 26th instant. Major Roberts, of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, will proceed in the same vessel to take command of Bassein: he is an experienced and excellent officer.

I consider that in a few weeks the Burmese soldiery of the upper country will have returned

to their homes, meeting with no sympathy from the Pegu population, and the Pegu soldiers themselves are already with their families; so that the garrison I have left could, in a military point of view, be withdrawn in six weeks, and it will then remain with the Government of India to decide whether it hold during the war this very important place. If so, further arrangements will be very necessary. Major Fraser, the commanding engineer, should visit it: a very little expense will make it a secure position. The barrack houses the soldiery are now in are excellent, and well built of wood. Fresh meat can be had, as the population of the place are coming under our protection in great numbers.

I may here remark, that that most admirable officer and clear-seeing man, my most respected late commander, Sir A. Campbell, attached great importance to the holding of Bassein.

After passing two clear days in arranging for the stability of the detachment to be left there, on the morning of the 22nd, the flotilla, with the exception of the *Sesostris*, which remains, weighed at daybreak, and reached Rangoon on the 23rd May, after an absence of only seven days.

To Commodore Lambert, and to this combined expedition, the Governor-General in Council owes all that professional ability and unremitting exertion could accomplish towards success, to which they so largely contributed. The East India Company's steamer *Proserpine*, Commander Brooking, arrived twenty-four hours after the place was taken; but even so, his activity was not lost, for he and his vessel went off the morning before we weighed, and destroyed the stockade that I mentioned to have passed on the way up the river.

Major Errington, of Her Majesty's 51st Light Infantry, who commanded the detachment of Troops embarked for Bassein, who principally directed this detachment, and who fought this detachment, deserves the particular thanks of the Governor-General in Council. I have great pleasure in forwarding his report of the operations for the perusal of his Lordship in Council.

I beg the best consideration of Government for Captain Rice and Lieutenant Carter, of the 51st Light Infantry, and for Lieutenant Ansley of the 9th Madras Native Infantry, all three severely wounded at the assault of the fort, and also for Lieutenant Ford of the Sappers and Miners, on the same occasion, for Lieutenant Rice, of Her Majesty's frigate Fox, who commanded the naval brigade, and who was severely wounded whilst particularly distinguishing himself in the attack of the fort.

It has been brought to my notice that Mr. Duncan, the second officer of the East India Company's ship *Tenasserim*, at the head of a party of men of his ship, behaved most gallantly upon the same occasion.

To Captain Darroch, of the 51st Light Infantry, and to Captain Latter, my Interpreter, thanks are due for their gallantry in forcing the traverse, and entering at the gate on the right of the enemy's position. Lieutenant Craster, of the Bengal Engineers, also merits thanks, and the plan of Bassein, which I enclose for the Governor-General's inspection, will prove his professional competency. To Lieutenants Elliott and Nightingale, with the Marines of Her Majesty's frigate Fox, and to Captain Campbell, of the East India Company's frigate *Sesostris*, I beg your Lordship in Council's kind consideration. To Doctor M'Cosh, and the officers of the medical department, thanks are particularly due.